"It Happened Again!"

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*Supporting narrated video (NV) demonstrations, high-speed video (HSV) clips, technical proofs (TP), and all past articles are available online at **drdavepoolinfo.com**. Reference numbers used in the articles help you locate the resources on the website.*

Do you remember the controversial call from the recent Men's 8-Ball Championship for the shot in **Image 1**? Online video **NV L.123** clearly explains and demonstrates why the no-call was bad.

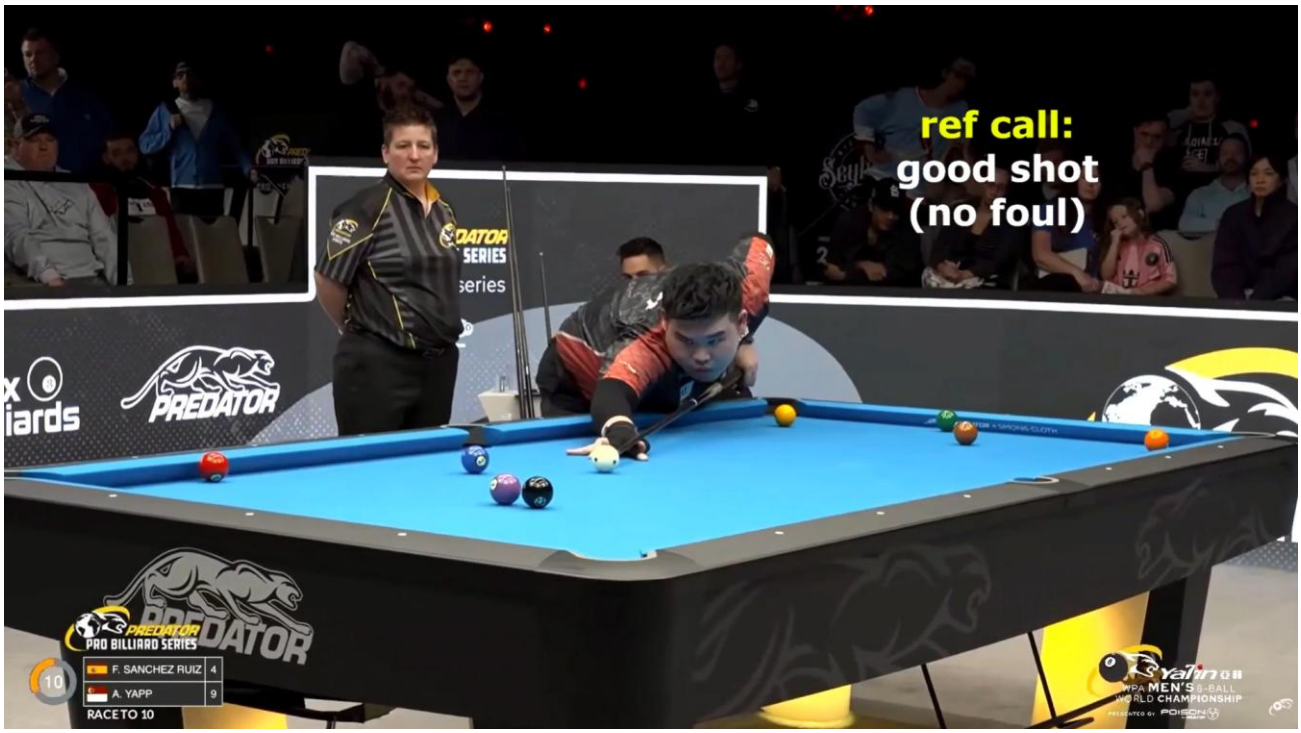


Image 1 Bad no-call in 8-Ball World Championship

Well, a similar situation arose again in the recent Women's 8-Ball World Championship. Like Yapp's shot, the call came at the end of the Finals match for the World Title. As shown in **Image 2**, Chezka Centeno left Kelly Fisher hooked behind the 12, shooting at the 6. Because it would be very difficult to pocket the 6 and get shape on the 8 with a jump or rail-first hit, Fisher decided to play a safety. The cue ball (CB) hit the side cushion before the 6, but it was not obvious if the CB hit the cushion again after the 6 or not. If not, the shot would be a foul. Watch the live video in online video **NV L.131** to see what you think.



Image 2 Shot that cost Kelly Fisher the game, match, and title

The ref approached to try to get a good look at the shot action (see Image 3), but he should have been even closer, looking straight down. The ref called a foul but offered to do a video review to be sure. The video was reviewed for more than 2 minutes, which might not seem long, but felt like an eternity when watching the match live. When the ref came back, he indicated that the initial foul call was correct, giving Centeno ball in hand for the game victory and the World title.

There was an overhead camera, but it is not clear whether that view was available during video replay. In online video **NV L.131**, I zoomed up on and slowed down the video footage we know was available. Even slower and zoomed up, the video really doesn't offer much in terms of proof. It looks like the CB is extremely close to touching the cushion, but it could be farther away than the camera view might suggest. The CB does seem to rock back very slightly at the end of its motion, but it is not clear if this brings it farther from the cushion or not. The final positions of the balls is shown in **Image 3**.

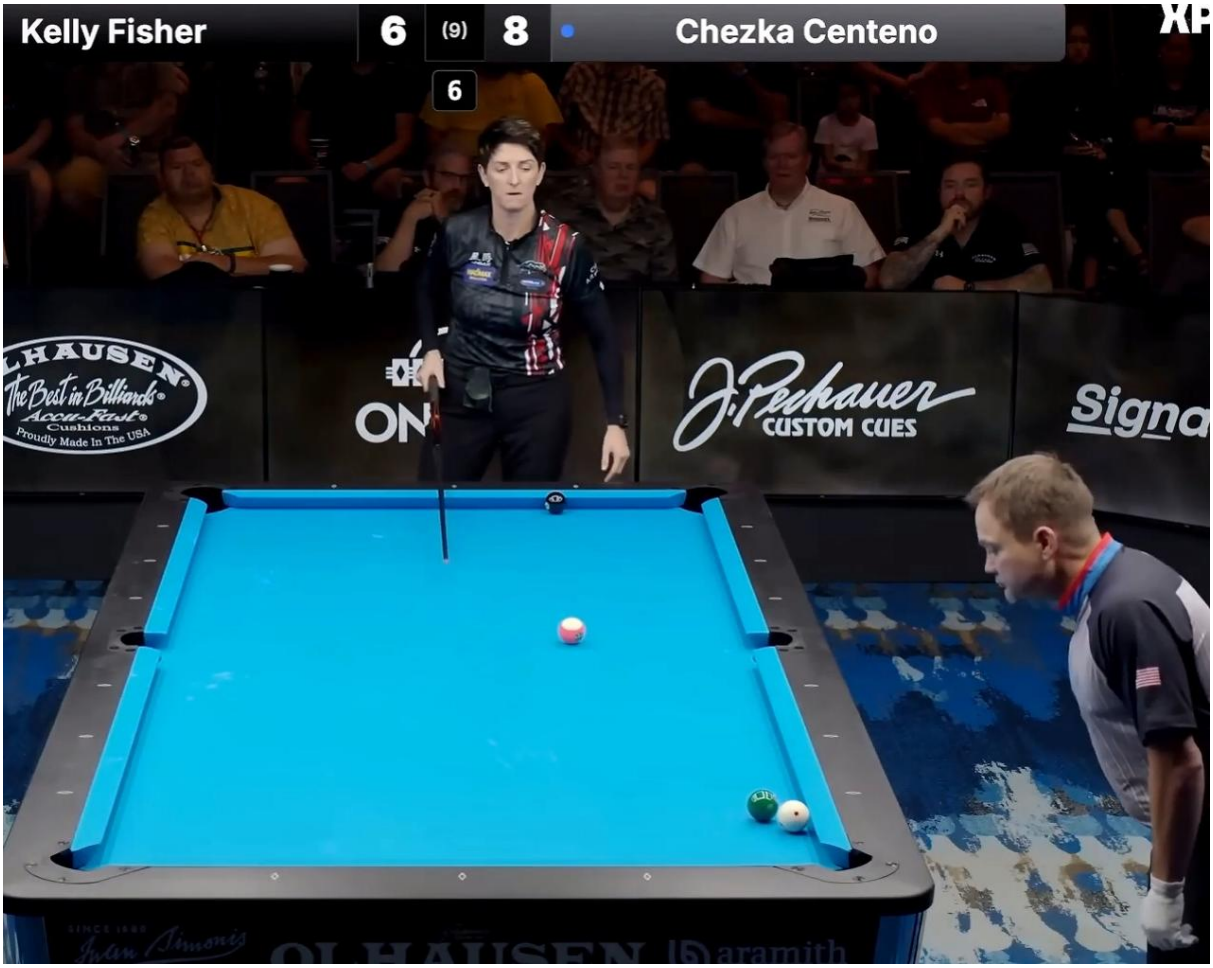


Image 3 Ball positions at the end of Kelly's shot

After reviewing the video, it seems to me that if the CB is not frozen to the cushion after the shot, then it could not have touched the cushion, since there was no obvious rebound motion away from the cushion. This must be what the ref thought since he clearly saw that the CB was not frozen to the cushion after the shot.

The WPA rules clearly stipulate that a foul cannot be called unless there is clear evidence of a foul, and any benefit of doubt must go to the shooter. Therefore, during video review, the reviewers must have been convinced there was no way the CB touched the cushion after hitting the 6.

To better understand and interpret what the ref might have seen live up close and during video review, I decided to re-create the shot and show several possibilities for what could have occurred. I judged the ball positions based on the two camera views available during the match video. In online video **NV L.131**, a show close-ups of a wide range of shots which were similar to Kelly's shot. Even with these controlled conditions, it wasn't always obvious if a shot was a foul or not. Sometimes, it is not clear if the CB is rocking back as it settles on the cloth, or if it is rebounding off the cushion. Sometimes it might look like the CB is contacting the cushion; but be aware that cushion nose height is well above the center of the ball, so part of the CB can be under the cushion nose with no actual contact (see **Image 4**).

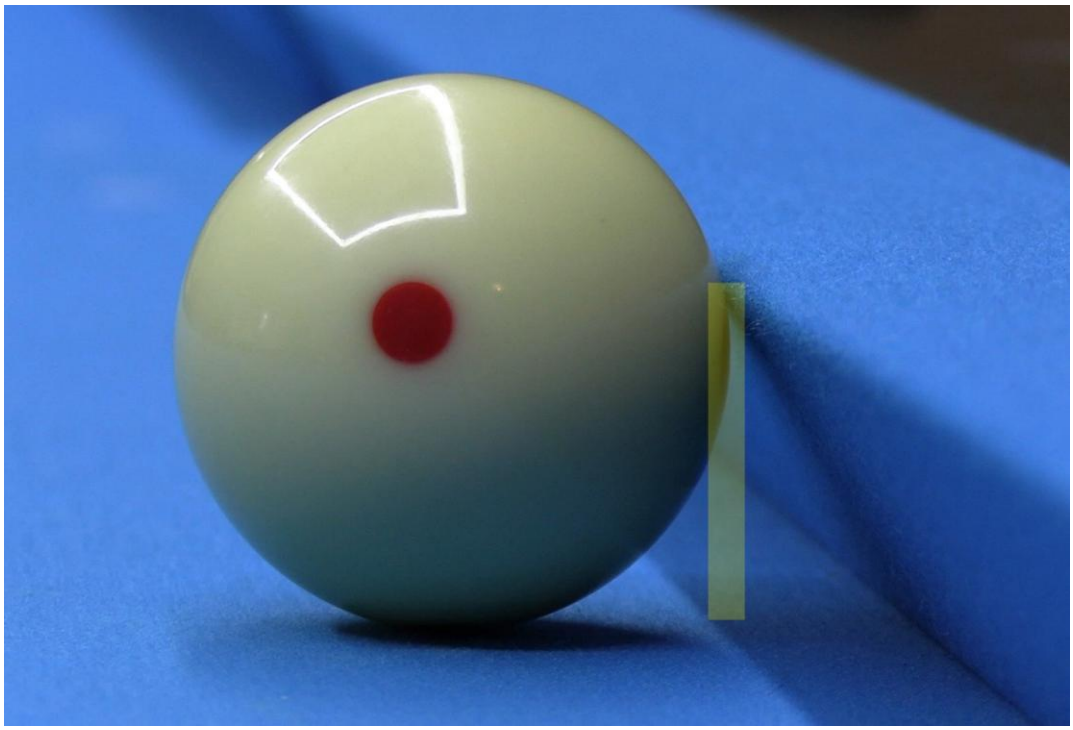


Image 4 Portion of ball under cushion nose

With the video example I think was most like Fisher's shot, the CB heads toward the cushion, and rocks back away very slightly, but it does not make contact with the cushion. The re-created shot is most definitely a foul. But even with the zoomed-up camera view, it can be difficult to tell if the CB is in contact with the nose of the cushion or not. In person, you can block light and shadows with your hand while looking from different angles to get a much clearer picture. With the final CB position in the example mentioned (see **Image 5)**, I was able to move the CB into the cushion with my finger much farther than you might think possible before actual contact with the cushion nose occurred. Check out online video **NV L.131** to see how deceiving a camera view can be.

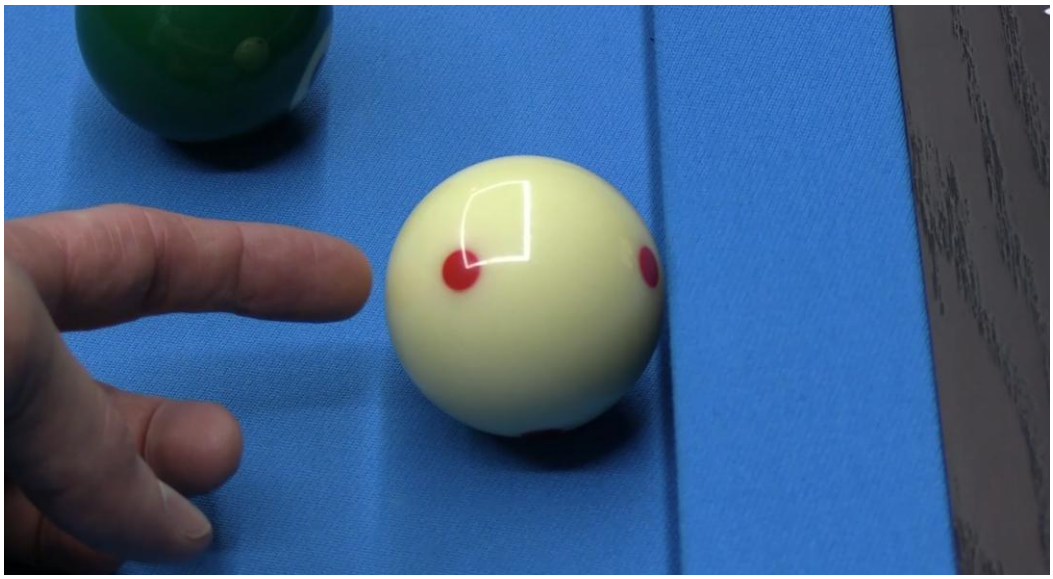


Image 5 Pushing ball under cushion nose

I suspect that with the gap size the ref clearly saw during and after Fisher's shot, and the lack of any clear evidence of CB rebound off the cushion, the ref decided that there was no possible way the CB could have contacted the cushion after the 6. If there was a reasonable chance the CB touched the cushion, then a foul should not have been called. The ref and other video reviewers must have been confident the CB did not touch the cushion after the 6.

Unlike with many controversial calls we have seen over the years, I don't think there are any compelling reasons or clear evidence to question the ref's call in this case. It is tough being a ref in a situation like this, where the game, match, and Title hang on this one call, but I think the ref and reviewers handled it well and were smart to take the time necessary during video review to make sure the call was correct. Good job, ref and officials!

Good luck with your game,
Dr. Dave


normal video

NV L.123 – Yapp's Controversial Tournament-Winning Shot in the 8-Ball World Championship … Was it a Foul?
NV L.131 – Foul That Cost Kelly Fisher the World 8-Ball Title … Was It the Correct Call?

PS:

- I know other authors and I tend to use lots of terminology, and I know not all readers are totally familiar with these terms. If you ever come across a word or phrase you do not fully understand, please refer to the online glossary at ***drdavepoolinfo.com***.

Dr. Dave is a PBIA Master Instructor, Dean of the Billiard University, and author of the book: The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards and numerous instructional DVD series, all available at: ***DrDaveBilliards.com****.*